



## Anatomy of the deadlock

by Kęstutis Girmius  
Special to the Lithuanian Review

Little, if any, progress has been made in resolving the confrontation between Vilnius and Moscow that has arisen because of Lithuania's effort to regain statehood, and none seems in the offing. In the best of circumstances disagreements concerning fundamental principles are not amenable to ready solution. This dispute has become even more intractable not only because both sides have made substantial investments of prestige, thus limiting their freedom to compromise, but also because the Kremlin seems determined to make Lithuania an object lesson for those enamoured of the fruits of secession. At the present moment, Moscow is intent on increasing pressure on Lithuania rather than abating the tension.

The cause of the dispute is as transparent as it is impervious to easy reconciliation. Lithuania's government has expressed its willingness to negotiate all matters except independence. This has always been its basic stance, although its defiant and truculent tone in the first week of independence may have in part obscured this commitment. Moscow has been adamant in its refusal to negotiate until Lithuania restores the *status quo ante* of March 11 or recognizes the continuing validity of Soviet law and constitution. The Lithuanian government cannot accede to Moscow's demand to renounce the act of independence without a complete loss of authority and a rupture in the ranks of Sąjūdis.

The Kremlin's freedom of action is subject to similar constraints. Gorbachev must be aware that new concessions to Lithuania or another exercise in vacillation would help convince other restive nationalities that the Lithuanian model of radical and unrelenting demands is also the most rational one in the present circumstances.

Although conventional wisdom portrays Gorbachev as a sagacious and forceful politician, a case can be made for the claim that his indecisiveness rather than Lithuania's rashness has been the major cause in precipitating the crisis.

From October to December 1989, Gorbachev or other members of the Politburo publicly asked the LCP on four occasions to suspend plans for forming an independent party. Each time the request was ignored with impunity, reinforcing the image of Gorbachev's weakness. If on any of these occasions or immediately after the founding of the independent LCP in December, Gorbachev had taken measures similar to those implemented after March 11, the newly elected parliament would have had second thoughts concerning the declaration of independence.

Cognizant of its collapsing credibility, the Kremlin seems intent on deliberately limiting its options in order to forclose the possibility of

new concessions. Thus, the immediate announcement of a policy of non-negotiation, the studied disregard of Lithuanian offers to negotiate, the threat of further sanctions made by the Presidential Council on April 9. The timing and provenance of the latter are particularly ominous. Issued a few days after Shevardnadze's visit to Washington by a body that is probably being prepared to challenge the hegemony of the Politburo, it seemed intended to emphasize that the policy of non-negotiation has the full support of the new council and is not subject to revision at Washington's request.

The Lithuanian government cannot renounce its declaration of independence without committing political suicide, while Moscow cannot alter its stance without revealing itself to be a paper tiger. The impasse is genuine. Facile resolutions are unavailable. Fortunately, in politics perception is as important as reality, and the human capacity for accepting multiple or even contradictory descriptions of events is almost limitless.

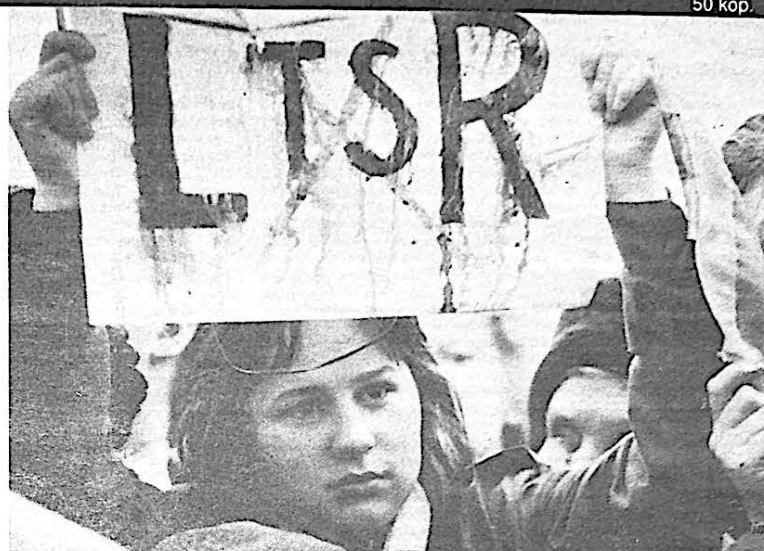
An implicit agreement not to challenge such multiple descriptions could be the key to a possible compromise.

By emphasizing its resolve to negotiate concerning everything but independence, the Lithuanian government has signalled its willingness to compromise as well as set the stage for denying that it succumbed to external pressure. Moscow needs to find an appropriate equivalent.

Maslennikov's suggestion that Lithuania suspend the implementation of all laws passed after the act of independence is a modest step in the right direction. It focuses the discussion on the validity of Soviet laws rather than on the intransigent question of the declaration of independence. This satisfies Gorbachev's demands for a process that respects Soviet law, while allowing Lithuania to continue challenging their validity on the basis of declaration of the supremacy of Lithuanian law, passed last May.

The probability of a negotiated settlement should not be overestimated. Even if one assumes that Gorbachev is more concerned to find a mutually acceptable solution than to impose his will on Lithuania, one must not forget that a felicitous disposition is a necessary but not sufficient condition for implementing a compromise. The stipulation of a five-year waiting period in the laws on secession seems a recipe for disaster. Even in normal times it would strain the patience of a long-suffering nation, while giving ample time for the disaffected and malevolent in the USSR to sabotage the process. In an era of economic collapse, political unrest and spiritual discontent it seems unjustifiable.

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## After victory, what future for Sąjūdis?

by Carla Gruodis  
The Lithuanian Review

The night the Lithuanian parliament voted to restore independence, one of the many questions being asked quietly by observers was - why aren't there hundreds of thousands of people outside as the independence movement Sąjūdis predicted? As a Sąjūdis-majority parliament voted to restore the country's sovereignty, a sad crowd of only 500 supporters stood outside the building in the rain.

The absence of the expected crowd pointed to a question that has been in the background of political events in Lithuania since March 11: now that democracy has been won and independence declared, what kind of role will Sąjūdis play in the future?

These questions should be answered at the Second Sąjūdis Congress, which will be held in Vilnius on April 21-22. But with the Congress ten days away, Sąjūdis leaders are increasingly divided over what direction Sąjūdis should take now that it is no longer the opposition. Like the founding Congress of Sąjūdis in October 1988, this meeting will bring together 1000 delegates and 3000 participants from across the country, and is the only organ of Sąjūdis that can radically change the organization.

"Sąjūdis used to be the opposition, but its status has changed completely," says Virgilijus Čepaitis, one of the 101 deputies elected to the 141-seat Supreme Council on the Sąjūdis election platform.

Until a month ago, Čepaitis was Executive Secretary of Sąjūdis, and ran the organization from crowded antique offices at the foot of Gediminas Prospect, facing the Cathedral Square in the centre of Vilnius. Now Mr. Čepaitis, along with former Sąjūdis Executive Council chairman

Vytautas Landsbergis and Council members Romualdas Ozolas, Kazimieras Motieka, Bronius Kuznickas and others spend all their waking hours in the new government's halls of power. Seeing things from the perspective of the Supreme Council building (symbolically located at the other end of Gediminas Prospect) Mr. Čepaitis thinks Sąjūdis' priority should now be to support the people it has in government. At the Congress, he will argue for the formation of a political party within Sąjūdis. The first step would be to introduce formal membership to Sąjūdis (which has never existed), which could include distinctions between various types of supporters (members and participants) and a new status for Sąjūdis deputies in the Lithuanian parliament.

But many of the Sąjūdis leaders who chose not to run for office are skeptical about the gains being made in the Lithuanian parliament, and feel that the organization must remain a strong opposition outside the government.

"Sure we have declared independence, but we are very far from achieving it," says Alexander Dobrynin, sitting in one of the modest offices of the Philosophy department of Vilnius University. Across the courtyard, in one of the university's auditoriums, Dobrynin and other disillusioned members of Sąjūdis meet every Thursday night as the "Liberals' Caucus", to discuss some of the deeper processes Lithuania is undergoing, and to evaluate the government's present strategies.

"My apologies to the two deputies in the room," one speaker said during the discussion last week, "but I think we all have to admit that our parliament is not doing everything it could." The criticism was not an angry one, but rather a statement of the fact that the present government of Lithuania is largely made up of

people who are only now in the process of learning what democracy and effective government, and for that matter, freedom, mean.

Vytautas Radzvilas, a young philosopher who helped found Sąjūdis, firmly believes that Sąjūdis must continue to exist as an opposition to the present order (i.e., the present government) as long as it takes Lithuanians to develop the intellectual and cultural foundations of a truly democratic society.

"We are not yet democrats, and it will be a long time before we are free," Radzvilas told the Sąjūdis Seimas (or parliament) a month ago.

Then, Radzvilas was one of the few Sąjūdis leaders who openly opposed what they considered a hasty declaration of independence, arguing that the country wasn't ready for it. In retrospect these theorists of Lithuania's liberation say it probably couldn't have been done otherwise, because the most Sąjūdis was able to accomplish in the two years of its existence was to formulate the idea of independence. Now that formal statehood has been established they believe Sąjūdis can play an important role in educating the citizens and politicians of the fledgling Lithuanian democracy. Instead of institutionalizing Sąjūdis membership, Radzvilas and Dobrynin believe that Sąjūdis should have a flexible decentralized structure, with a small, strong leadership and completely autonomous local councils.

"If Sąjūdis itself becomes a political party it will lose that potential, because then it would be able to educate only its own party members," says Dobrynin, shrugging his shoulders when asked what will happen at the Congress next weekend.

"Whatever is decided, it won't be the same Sąjūdis. But it will be something else, and it will still be necessary."

## The beginning of the end of the Soviet empire

"March 11 will be remembered in history as the beginning of the end of the Russian empire," said leading Russian democrat and historian Yuri Afanasyev at a gathering of 300,000 people in Vingis Park in Vilnius, on April 7.

Afanasyev, one of the leaders of the Inter-regional Group of People's Deputies, came to Lithuania to see with his own eyes what was happening here. We talked to him in the Supreme Council of the Lithuanian Republic.

*Lithuanian Review:* Do you, as a historian, see a historical law, a logic in the events in Lithuania?

Yuri Afanasyev: Of course. This is, first of all, a struggle for an inde-

pendent existence, nationally and politically. This is what Western Europe went through from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth. The other part of the process is the breakdown of the last empire in the world. In this case both processes came together at once. And here in Lithuania a necessary politics is at the leading edge of events.

*LR:* But the law on the mechanism of secession from the USSR

was passed after the secession of Lithuania and Estonia...

YA: This is yet more evidence that we do not always begin at the beginning. We did not agree on what this huge Eurasian space—which in the beginning was the Russian Empire and then became the Soviet Union—is.

It is clear where all this may lead: after the Baltics, the Georgians, Moldavians and all the rest will want

to have independence. This is seen as something bad. There is not enough courage and wisdom to see this as a positive process—the acquisition of sovereignty by future allied states not on an imperial, but a civilized basis. For this to happen, new principles of common life, co-existence are needed. They have to be changed from their roots; only then can we

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# Realpolitik and the politics of ideals

by Ina Navazelskis

In this fifth week after the new Lithuanian leadership declared independence on March 11, two words have been heard here almost daily. As Soviet sabre-rattling has followed in the wake of this declaration, the Lithuanian leadership has urged people to maintain their "kantrybė" (patience) and "ištvėmė" (endurance).

So far, people have done just that. Lithuanians continued their daily lives as Soviet helicopters scattering anti-independence leaflets whirled overhead; as Soviet soldiers armed with automatic weapons occupied one public building after another; as Soviet tanks rumbled noisily through city streets and the countryside.

Yet, given the speed with which independence was declared in March, patience and endurance were exactly what the new leadership itself seemed to lack. It thereby demonstrated that it was not following Realpolitik — a policy based on recognizing existing power structures, but Idealpolitik — a policy based on idealism, on a vision of what should be. It was heeding the call of a revolutionary trumpet.

That trumpet, at least temporarily, drowned out those voices which warned that Lithuania was still unprepared to take this step. At that moment, however, the new leaders probably could not have done otherwise. Who can really say that declaring independence on March 11 was premature? Lithuanians have waited

a long time for this precious goal to be realized.

Two generations were born and raised while Lithuania silently mourned the independence snatched away 50 years ago. Two years have passed from the first time when Lithuanians publicly broke that silence — rediscovering the society they had lost along with their independence. (In that time, practically all of Eastern Europe has broken free from Soviet control.) But still, only a bare two weeks — from February 24 to March 11, 1990 — were allowed by Sąjūdis, the victors of the elections to the Lithuanian Parliament, to prepare for the return of independence to Lithuania.

Today, this leadership is confronted with the problem of how to make the independence it declared real. It needs the cooperation of a very unwilling partner — the Soviet Union — which stands to lose more than it gains, knows this, and doesn't like it. In the face of real Soviet aggression, the Lithuanian leadership has continued to use only the language of Idealpolitik — issuing proclamations, registering protests, holding rallies. These are all peaceful, non-violent reactions. The Lithuanian leadership is, without a doubt, totally justified in resorting to them.

But the essence of Realpolitik is that in order to serve one's own interests, one must recognize the need to find common ground with an adversary. Calling for negotiations has been the leadership's most substantial gesture to Realpolitik.

When they were the voice of an op-

position movement, the current leadership followed a strategy that was as pragmatic as it was idealistic. And it worked. But that balance has shifted dramatically since the advent of the Sąjūdis-controlled parliament. Adherents of Realpolitik — both within and outside Sąjūdis — have been uninfluential, if not voiceless.

That this has awakened disquiet — in a society almost unanimously committed to the vision and ideals of independence — has not gone unnoticed. In a study conducted between March 28 and April 2 by the Public Opinion Research Center at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, an overwhelming 91% of the 1583 respondents surveyed supported the re-establishment of Lithuanian independence. But 31% of them also believed that it had been declared too soon. And while 76% of the people surveyed said they were satisfied with the work of the Lithuanian Parliament so far, almost half of those — 34% — nevertheless said that satisfaction was only partial.

The skepticism that these numbers reveal begins with the declaration of independence itself. Why was there such a rush? If Lithuania had waited patiently for fifty years, why should a few more months, even another year, matter? Why jump now "naked into the netles" (as Lithuanians say) when soon one might be able to walk through them fully clothed?

There are many answers, on many levels. Some people (many with their own political axe to grind) maintain that declaring independence was the vehicle

Sąjūdis deputies used to secure the power they had won at the ballot box. There is some basis for such accusations. In the two weeks that Sąjūdis, now the majority, prepared its program for the first session of the new parliament, the independent Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) was almost totally ignored. Sąjūdis perceived the LCP as its primary political adversary, and who consults with one's adversaries in setting up a new government?

Still, the accusations that declaring independence was primarily a Sąjūdis power play neither suffice, nor do justice to the movement's leaders. They had the courage to stand by their convictions. And they had a mandate from the people of Lithuania to do so.

The Sąjūdis deputies in the Lithuanian leadership argue that independence had to be declared, either now or never. They point to Mikhail Gorbachev being voted Soviet President by the Third Extraordinary Session of the Congress of People's Deputies in mid-March. They maintain that Gorbachev, with additional wide-ranging dictatorial powers, could prevent Lithuania from realizing independence in the future.

Still another argument was voiced by Kazimiera Prunskienė (now Prime Minister) in the final hours before independence was declared: Lithuania's newly elected parliament needed to define what it was and what it wanted. And it needed to make this clear to the world and to the Lithuanian people.

But are these arguments necessarily

true? Gorbachev could and can move against Lithuania any time he wants to, whether he is President of the Soviet Union or not. And there is no confusion in the world today about what Lithuania wants.

Yet such views were nevertheless decisive. They created a momentum that made it impossible not to declare independence on March 11. Why?

Because they spoke to Lithuanian nightmares, evoking fears that haunt a people who have been gagged for half a century. To understand their power, consider what happened in 1940. At that time, when Lithuania was pressured into joining the Soviet Union, her last independent leadership decided to acquiesce silently, hoping it could save lives. It didn't save any. The catastrophe that followed — the political terror, murder, war, mass arrests and deportations — was then doubly terrifying. Lithuania had lost its voice. Unable to protest, it was forgotten by the world. And the world, at least officially, was cynically informed that it was happy.

Lithuania's new leaders, the first true representatives of its people in 50 years, couldn't let that happen again. When they were handed the first realistic opportunity to re-establish independence, they took it. The ghosts from the past were powerful.

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Yuri Afanasyev:

hope for those processes which are taking place all over Europe today to begin here. But instead of changing these imperial structures, we wait for some sort of "integrating processes" and the fulfillment of the abracadabra in the national platform: "to fill the Soviet Federation with real content". What this is — nobody knows.

Gorbachev is really a talented politician, but talented in the sense that he can follow events; he always needs to consider the arrangement of power in the given moment to determine a certain basic vector. This policy one could call "vector" policy, i.e. that he is able to choose a resultant force and follow it. But the range of options open to him is steadily narrowing; and the pace at which new factors come into play is increasing daily. This political "backlogging", this rapid accumulation of unsolved problems, is pregnant with terrible consequences. This path can lead society to catastrophe. Earlier, for instance, national conflicts differed in time and space from each other, now, as intervals are getting smaller, the ring is about to close: the Baltics, Byelorussia, the Ukraine, Moldavia, the Transcaucasian region, Middle Asia. A closed circle is the result.

But there are other deep contradictions besides national ones. Two days ago, the Leningrad City Council dismissed the head of Gostelradio [the state-owned TV and radio administration - trans.]. In Leningrad and broadcast a live interview with Ivanov [an investigator of major crimes who has accused Politburo members of corruption - trans.]. This is direct disobedience of the decision of USSR Gostelradio. And not long from now we expect the Moscow City Council to pass a lot of radical laws and resolutions. So, in addition to the horizontal, national contradic-

tions, there are vertical contradictions as well.

Moreover, the deterioration of the economy is continuing; no measures at all have been taken against it.

LR: Is it possible to make the process of the breakup of the empire a regulated one?

YA: It is necessary to have the fixed intention to transform the foundations of the USSR. If people are really interested in managing everything and concerned that we live in a civilized way, it is necessary to alter this policy of tearing change. We have to overcome the empire syndrome and stop thinking that a breakdown of power is taking place.

LR: But are the democratic forces of Russia ready to lead such a transformation?

YA: Not yet. Not only due to a lack of organization and unity of the democratic forces, but also, as it seems to me, to the fact that Russian society is not ready yet for a positive reception of such changes. A lot of Russians still have the idea that we collected the empire piece by piece, and now somebody wants, having made use of us Russians, to leave. These emotions are very widespread — they should also be considered. If an awareness of these problems took hold at the level of official government policy, it would be possible, perhaps, to manage things faster.

It is necessary that people perceive this process not as the breakdown of power, not as the ruin of the USSR, but as a positive process, which is irreversible, which is not to be stopped by any means.

LR: Is the democratic movement in Russia nevertheless broadening?

YA: Many political actions, in Russia as well as on an All-Union level, are now under preparation. In the beginning of May, the founding congress of Russian Social Democrats will take place. This is a very important event since the Social Democrats will probably become the most powerful political force in the

future. The founding congress of the "Democratic Platform" is also about to take place. And even if its name is still "Democratic Platform of the CPSU", we can speak as a matter of fact of the founding congress of a new party. It is still not clear what it will be called — perhaps the Party of Democratic Socialism. It is not impossible that the "Democratic Platform of the CPSU" may split before the congress, that part will go to the congress of the Social Democratic. In principle, these organizations are very close; their cooperation is also possible.



Apart from this, next week we will have a meeting of the coordinating council of the Inter-regional Group, and in the end of April we intend to have a general meeting. And, finally, on May 7, the Civil Action Committee will meet, in which the "Democratic Platform", the Social Democrats, the Inter-regional Group, "Democratic Russia" and the leaders of all democratic movements and people's fronts will be unified. There we want to discuss a number of documents and make up the Committee: a conception for a round table, the charter of the Civil Action Committee and principles for the reform of the USSR (union-state construction, self-determination of sovereign states). I believe that as long as the democratic forces are not united, as long as there is no united

action in the entire Soviet Union, we will not reach this aim.

LR: But there has already been such an action on February 25.

YA: These were only demonstrations, meetings all over the country, and they were successful, from my point of view. They have influenced the attitudes of the centre. But, unfortunately, not in the direction we wanted.

LR: They led to the introduction of presidential power?

YA: Yes, first of all this. And secondly, to start a powerful campaign in the media. All democratic forces are now depicted as a destructive principle, as enemies of perestroika. Pravda published an editorial entitled "Democracy and anti-democracy" in which all this was reflected. It turns out that the main culprits for the fact that perestroika is not moving are those who go to meetings and demonstrations. They are people who do not know what is going on, who are credulous and give in easily to demagogic tricks. But the main culprits are the instigators of the Inter-regional Group and the leaders of people's fronts. An image of "enemies of perestroika" is being created, of people with frustrated political ambitions, who are hungry for power, and who are destabilizing the situation in the country. That is the scheme which is propagated now.

There is a tacit resolution in the West to deal with Eastern Europe and to leave the Soviet Union completely to Gorbachev. They have faith in him, considering that the general direction of change is not in doubt. It's as if they said, "Let Gorbachev deal with all these Soviet issues, and we will deal with the admission of the Eastern European states into the civilized world." Nobody says this out loud, but judging from the reaction to events in the USSR I would say this. If this is really the policy of the West, then it is very erroneous. The internal crises of

the Soviet Union really can destroy the entire earth. And I mean this literally — we have bacteriological and nuclear weapons, an unregulated chemical industry...

But there is also another aspect. If the self-ruin of the USSR continues it can be halted only by a policy of foresight. If the leadership would adopt a policy of foresight, this process could be turned into a controlled, even planned process of establishing a civilized community on a large territory. Now it continues to be erratic and therefore destructive. This process leads to imbalance, which carries the possibility of a sudden explosion. Look at the Transcaucasian and Central Asian regions, where unstable structures have developed. If these are not examined and monitored, events could lead to an extremely dangerous situation.

Living nations and states can't be carved up. In 1917, half of Azerbaijan was given to Iran, and half of Armenia to Turkey, in the hope that everything will finally work out somehow, that the world revolution will come soon, and that there will no longer be national borders. Borders were treated as a provisional matter... And it turned out not to be so provisional. Now, on the one hand, the consequences of a cut through living structures arise, and on the other, suppressed internal religious conflicts, which can arise at any moment. The entire Moslem world can suddenly appear in another light.

LR: So the policy of the USSR should be more far-sighted on this question?

YA: Both our policy and the American policy should be more far-sighted. Moreover, it should be to a certain extent a united policy. There cannot be simply a one-sided policy of the USA or the Soviet Union. We live in a very fragile world, and we need mutual, and probably multi-lateral attempts to explore different options. Now we are somehow left on our own.

## The LITHUANIAN

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## REVIEW

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# The new Lithuanian Government

**Prime Minister:** Kazimiera Prunskiene  
**Deputy Prime Ministers:** Romualdas Ozolas,  
 Algirdas Brazauskas  
**State Prosecutor:** Arturas Paulauskas

## Council of Ministers: sworn in April 11, 1990

**Internal Affairs:** Marijonas Misiukonis  
 lawyer, Minister of Internal Affairs from  
 1989, member Lithuanian Communist  
 Party (LCP)

**Finance:** Romualdas Sikorskis  
 b. 1926; financial economist, Minister of  
 Finance 1957-90, member LCP

**Foreign Affairs:** Algirdas Saudargas  
 b. 1948; biophysicist; member Christian  
 Democratic Party, Sąjūdis Executive  
 Council

**Justice:** Pranas Kuris  
 b. 1938; lawyer, Minister of Justice  
 1977-90, member LCP

**Agriculture:** Vytautas Petras Knasys  
 b. 1937, agricultural scientist, Minister of  
 Agriculture from 1989, member LCP

**Culture and Education:** Darius Kuolys  
 b. 1961; historian, cultural theorist, from  
 1988-90, an editor of the underground  
 cultural journal "Sietynas"

**Architecture/Urban Planning:** Algis Nasvytis  
 b. 1934; architect

**Industry:** Rimvydas Jasinavičius  
 b. 1943; sound engineer; previously Direc-  
 tor of the Vilma electronics factory

**Health:** Juozas Olekas  
 b. 1955; physician

**Forestry:** Vaidotas Antanaitis  
 b. 1928; agricultural engineer

**Social Security:** Algis Dobravolskis  
 b. 1951; economist, member LCP

**Material Resources:** Romualdas Kozyrovičius  
 b. 1943; engineer/economist, from 1990  
 Chairman of Material Supply Commission  
 of Lithuania

**Economy:** Vytas Navickas  
 b. 1952; economist, mathematician

**Trade:** Albertas Sinevičius  
 b. 1943; mechanical engineer, member LCP

**Communications:** Kostas Birulis  
 b. 1925; electrical engineer; from 1965-88  
 worked in the Lithuanian SSR Ministry of  
 Communications

**Transportation:** Jonas Biržiškis  
 b. 1932; Mining Engineer, from 1974-90  
 chief engineer of the transport construction  
 material association, "Granitas"

**Energy:** Steponas Ašmontas  
 b. 1945; radio physicist and electronics  
 specialist

## New government for the new state

By Edward Tuskenis  
 The Lithuanian Review

On April 11, 1990, exactly one month after the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania declared the re-establishment of Lithuanian independence, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania was presented to the Supreme Council.

Seventeen ministers, as well as Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene and her two deputies, Algirdas Brazauskas and Romualdas Ozolas, took a solemn oath to strengthen the independence of Lithuania.

Article 1 of the Law Regarding the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, passed on March 22, 1990 by the Supreme Council, states:

"The Government of the Republic of Lithuania is the supreme governing agency of the state of Lithuania."

The Lithuanian Supreme Council, having declared the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence, went about appointing the first Lithuanian government since 1940 that will have any real power.

In the end, it will be the effectiveness of this first government of newly-independent Lithuania that will decide the pace of the fulfillment of the declaration of March 11.

On March 17, 1990, the Lithuanian Supreme Council confirmed Kazimiera Prunskiene as Prime Minister. She had been deputy prime minister in the former government of Vytautas Sakalauskas. A professor of economics, Mrs. Prunskiene was one of the architects of the economic sovereignty law for the Baltic republics. It was the effective failure of this law (which the Lithuanians blamed on obstructionism on the part of Moscow) that helped push the Lithuanians to a quicker declaration of independence. It symbolized very well the limited powers of the government of a Soviet socialist republic. In effect, the real power lay with the local Communist Party and its ruling structures—the Central Committee, Buro, and First Secretary.

One of the main features of the

Law Regarding the Government was to slash the number of ministries from 38 to 18 (and later, 17 — the prospective Ministry of Defense was downgraded to departmental status).

A number of ministries, of course, will have much more to do now under the new conditions of independence. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which, according to the old joke, could have been compared to the Czechoslovakian Naval Ministry, will have to be completely revamped as it takes over the management of the diplomacy of an independent state.

Prime Minister Prunskiene, addressing the Supreme Council after the ministers' oath, said that the main tasks of the new government will be to strengthen and embody independence, and to fundamentally reform Lithuania's social and economic system.

A complicated task facing the government is prospective negotiations with the Soviet Union on the whole complex of relations, especially economic, between the two countries.

The Prime Minister noted that questions of transport, border controls, customs, and diplomatic representation abroad are among the most pressing points for negotiation. The Lithuanian government, as of mid-April, was almost finished with preparation for future negotiations.

In Mrs. Prunskiene's opinion, the Government will have to show much initiative in proposing new legislation, and there will have to be a clear division between the executive branch and the legislative Supreme Council.

The Prime Minister also noted that the Government has not yet completed organization of its apparatus; this was hampering effective work.

The Law Regarding the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, which is the basis for the reform of the Government, lists in 13 points what the main directions of the work of the Lithuanian Government should be.

Protection of property rights is listed first, stressing the equality of

various forms of property.

• The Government is in charge of defense and "national security."

• Falling under the Government's competence is consideration of aspects of the Lithuanian economy, with the proviso that principles of a market economy along with social interests be followed. The Government prepares concepts and plans for economic development. Social justice, and a relationship between the salaries of working people and the social utility of their work is to be sought. The Government is to create conditions for the raising of the standard of living, and for the satisfaction of cultural and spiritual needs.

• Governmental regulation of scientific and technical progress in Lithuania is allowed for.

• An active public health policy must be followed by the Government.

• The Government is to encourage economic ties with foreign countries.

• Rational exploitation and conservation of natural resources must be sought by the Government, as well as protection of the environment.

• The Government defends civil rights, protects public order.

• The carrying out of foreign policy is left to the Government.

• The Government presents proposals for legislation to the Supreme Council.

• The Law Regarding the Government specifies that no minister may serve more than two consecutive terms.

• Ministers are appointed and removed by the Supreme Council, on recommendation of the President of the Supreme Council.

• The Law also notes that the Government must present to the Supreme Council, for discussion and approval, its program for its term of office. According to the Law, the Government, at least once a year, must account for its work to the Supreme Council. The whole government, or any minister, may be removed by a 2/3 majority vote of no confidence in the Supreme Council.

## Hello? Lithuania calling!

by Edward Lucas  
 Special to The Lithuanian Review

"Practically, we have no communications," said the Communications Minister gloomily, looking at the array of ten telephones on the side of his desk. Despite his own plentiful links with the full range of public and government telephone systems, his pessimism about the Lithuanian authorities' inability to communicate independently with the outside world is, sadly, justified. Only one of the republic's 47 international telephone lines leads directly abroad — to Suwalki in Poland. All the others could, at the flick of a switch, be cut off by Moscow.

The difficulties of establishing independent telephone and postal links with the outside world are a perfect example of the nitty-gritty difficulties of a return to nationhood, and Lithuania's current lack of independent communications is a telling indication of the republic's tenuous control over its own affairs.

Mr. Kostas Birulis, 65, was formerly the chief of the Communications Ministry international department. Two days after his appointment as Minister, he explained how he is trying to extract the republic from the morass of the Soviet communications system, and create efficient, independent links with the outside world. The first move will be a private parcel service via Poland, which is being set up by a Polish-Lithuanian joint venture called Pelita, based in the southern Polish town of Katowice. Soviet customs authorities permitting, this will provide at least one, if limited and expensive, link with the rest of the world, somewhat on the lines of such

well-known Western private services as DHL and Federal Express.

A second important initiative is the plan to link Lithuania to the Polish telephone system, via a fibre-optic cable. This project, at a cost of \$4.5m, will take at least eighteen months to complete. Preliminary negotiations with the Poles are already underway, and the Danish telecommunications firm NKT is set to supply the technology. For the time being, however, most Lithuanians' principal link to the world is the creaking Soviet telephone system. (Senior figures, such as the Communications Minister, have access to the Soviet Union's special government telephone system, which Mr. Birulis says he only uses when he wants to be completely sure the KGB is aware of what he is saying.)

Of the republic's 47 international lines, ten go to Poland, but via the Russian Kaliningrad (Koenigsberg) enclave. There are 26 outgoing international lines via Moscow, of which ten are automatic (direct dial), and ten automatic incoming lines. According to the manager of the Vilnius international telephone exchange, Mr. Jonas Jagmirus, there had by the end of last month been no sign that Moscow was interfering with Lithuania's international telephone traffic. But given the ease with which the phone links, as well as the 200 telex lines could be cut, it is not surprising that Lithuania has made discreet contingency plans. (Mr. Birulis is, not surprisingly, unwilling to give details of what he calls "plans for the dark days".)

It is surprising to the outsider that apparently no attempt has been made to bring in one of the now readily available satellite telephones.

These gadgets, which can be carried in a case the size of a large briefcase, are often used by telephone companies and emergency services in underdeveloped countries and disaster areas. They provide instant, if expensive, independent outgoing communication with the international telephone network, by means of a collapsible satellite dish which feeds a signal directly up to an international telecommunications satellite.

Lithuania does in fact have access to one international satellite communications network via the Inmarsat marine telephone system, with which the shipping offices at the republic's main port, Klaipėda, are connected.

But the most pressing problem for Mr. Birulis is not how to survive a crisis, but how to establish a normal sovereign communications system. The key problem here is to regain membership of two Swiss-based international bodies — the World Postal Union in Berne, and the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva. Only through membership of the ITU can a country acquire an international dialling code, and only with the consent of the WPU can a country issue postage stamps recognized as valid abroad. After the Second World War the Soviet Union took over the representation of all three Baltic states in these organizations. Letters asking for readmission to both bodies are currently being drafted, but it is feared that securing membership against the will of the Soviet Union would be difficult if not impossible.

Edward Lucas is the Prague correspondent for The Independent, and was in Vilnius at the end of March.



## K R O N I K A

## MARCH 1990

23 Eleven positions in the Council of Ministers are filled; new Lithuanian government nearly formed; Artūras Paulauskas appointed new Lithuanian State Prosecutor.

At 3:30 AM, a full tank division enters Vilnius, passes by parliament buildings in which the Supreme Council is holding an emergency all-night session, and proceeds to the "Northern Town" military base. According to unofficial sources, about 80,000 troops, double the usual number, are now stationed in Lithuania.

With the help of dozens of Soviet paratroopers, pro-Moscow communists in Lithuania loyal to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) occupy three buildings in Vilnius legally belonging to the independent Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP): the October and Lenin district Party headquarters, and the Vilnius City Party headquarters. Pro-Moscow forces claim the buildings need "additional security" and that they are only taking preventative measures to protect what they claim is their rightful property against "provocations". Regular employees of the buildings, which during the past two months have been transferred to various non-Party organizations, are turned away at the

group" to "avoid accidental confrontations between the Soviet army and civilian inhabitants of Lithuania." During a meeting the next morning in the Lithuanian Council of Ministers building, General Varenikov's representatives from the Vilnius Garrison say they cannot provide a full explanation of their plans in Lithuania, but say they will inform Lithuanian authorities of any future actions or manoeuvres. Lithuanian Deputy Minister Romualdas Ozolas reports that both sides agreed to provide precise answers to each other's questions and that no decisions should be unilateral, and is optimistic that the meeting might have set the groundwork for negotiations regarding the Soviet Army's status in Lithuania. However, only one additional meeting of the group is held (the next day) and Lithuanian authorities realize that the Army's promises are empty.

In Vilnius, a Soviet Army helicopter drops thousands of leaflets calling people to attend a rally by the USSR Citizens' Committee in Lithuania at 16:00 on March 27 by the Supreme Council building.

26 Three new Ministers (culture and education, energy, and urban planning) appointed to the Council of Ministers, completing the formation of the new Lithuanian government.

Five Soviet paratroopers occupy the Klaipeda City Party Headquarters, but retreat when the Klaipeda Party Secretary calls in local militia, television and civilian supporters.

Commander of the Vilnius Garrison delivers a formal complaint listing 24 crimes committed against the Soviet Army in Lithuania, including incidents of minor attacks against Soviet soldiers, children throwing rocks at troops, etc. The statement demands that the Lithuanian government "empower the Lithuanian SSR Ministry of Internal Affairs to explain these acts of hooliganism and ensure that no incidents of the sort occur in the future."

Vice-President Kazimieras Motieka issues a point-by-point reply the next day, indicating that most of the Soviet Army's claims are exaggerated and unsubstantiated.

Fears mount that more buildings will be taken over by Pro-Moscow forces, and Lithuanian authorities become particularly concerned about the fate of the Radio and TV Studio, the Central Post and Telegramme, the main printing plant (still property of the LCP), and even the Supreme Council building.

27 At 3:30 AM, several dozen Soviet paratroopers break into the Naujoji Vilnia Psychiatry Hospital, storm through the building and abduct 12 Lithuanian refugees from the Soviet Army who were seeking refuge in the hospital under the auspices of the Lithuanian Red Cross. Minister of Health Juozas Olekas reports evidence that bones were broken and blood shed. An American TV crew (ABC) arrives at the scene minutes after the raid; the crew's videotapes are confiscated at gunpoint.

At about 6:00 AM two more Lithuanian soldiers are abducted from the Ziegdriu Red Cross Hospital near Kaunas. Hospital staff report that five trucks of Soviet paratroopers drove into the hospital's territory, intruded into several sections of the hospital, broke down doors, cut phone lines, harassed staff and drove away with two patient/soldiers.

Including those caught by paratroopers while trying to escape from the Psychiatric Hospital, a total of 21 soldiers are abducted that night, their whereabouts unknown to the Lithuanian government.

At 7:00 AM, again at the request of pro-Moscow Lithuanian Communists, fifty Soviet paratroopers occupy the LCP Central Committee building (the LCP's headquarters in Lithuania). Still allowing the LCP staff and Party leaders to use their offices, the troops are stationed on every floor of the building and strictly monitor entry to the building. LCP First Secretary A. Brazauskas seeks an explanation from CPSU authorities in Moscow, but gets no response.

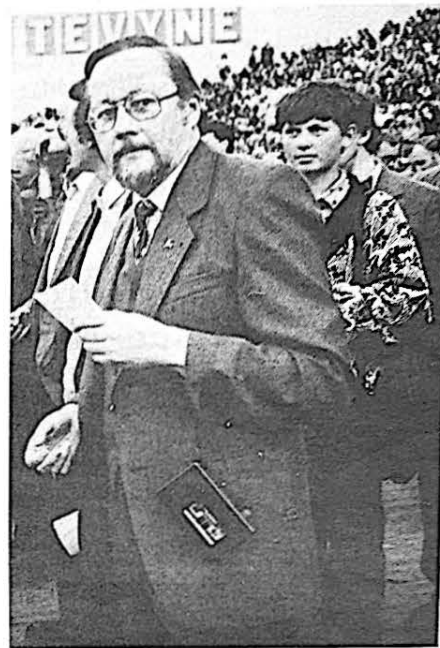
Lithuanian President Landsbergis interprets the Soviet statement "We will not use force in Lithuania unless lives are endangered" as a shift in the Soviet position suggesting Moscow is prepared to use force. Appealing once again to the West to take the necessary measures to ensure Lithuania's safety, Landsbergis asks the press "Is the West once again ready to sell Lithuania to the Soviet Union?"

At 16:00, 6,000 people (organizers and Soviet news agency TASS report 20,000) attend Soviet Citizens' Committee in Lithuania demonstration in a square next to the Lithuanian Supreme Council. Attendance far lower than expected; and provocations or attack on parliament building that government expected do not occur. A shift in LCP-CPSU's strategy is evident, with protest focusing on the fear that Soviet citizens' rights are in danger, that they are for Lithuanian independence but in the context of a new federation, but ultimately requiring that the legislation passed by the Lithuanian Supreme Council on and after March 11 be repealed. LCP-CPSU claim they have not occupied any buildings in Vilnius because it is all rightfully their property and, as pro-Soviet leader Vladislav Shved told the crowd "you can't occupy what is already legally yours." Demonstrators react most strongly to calls for the removal of Lithuanian leaders, particularly President Vytautas Landsbergis, and for the holding of a referendum both on question of independence and presidency (some support for Brazauskas). Waving more Lithuanian flags than Soviet ones, the crowd calmly listens to the arguments of LCP-CPSU leaders that the situation in Lithuania is out of control and order should be directly restored by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Delegation of Polish senators in Vilnius, meets with new Lithuanian leadership to discuss cooperation between the two governments.

Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gremitski announces in Moscow that all foreign citizens are "requested to leave the Lithuanian SSR and temporarily refrain from entering its territory."

28 Soviet General Varenikov is reported to have gone to Moscow for consultations. Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene reports she has personally tried to contact Soviet President Gorbachev several times by telephone but has had no



Photograph by V. Kliukas

Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis at April 7 rally in Vingis Park, Vilnius.

reply. Polish Prime Minister Mazowiecki offers Poland as a neutral territory for negotiations between Lithuania and the USSR.

The first Republic of Lithuania visa is issued to "The Independent" (UK) journalist Edward Lucas by Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas at Vilnius airport. (However, after several days in Vilnius, Lucas is forced to leave Lithuania after Soviet Foreign Ministry puts pressure on the Moscow bureau of The Independent.)

29 Soviet news agency TASS quotes Chairman of Soviet Citizens' Committee in Lithuania, Vladislav Shved, as saying "There will be no other way out than to introduce direct Presidential rule in Lithuania."

Soviet Ministry of Defense announces that Lithuanian refugees from the Soviet army will not be prosecuted if they return to their units of their own free will, but that those who must be returned by force will be tried and punished. (It is announced several days later that the trials will be civilian rather than military.) Lithuanian authorities estimate that 7 to 10 youths in hiding are being abducted every day.

30 Soviet Deputy Procurator Vasiliev arrives in Vilnius to attempt to replace the new Lithuanian State Prosecutor Artūras Paulauskas (appointed a week before) with a Prosecutor who will be loyal to Moscow — Antanas Petrauskas, previously the Procurator of the Riga Military Command. Vasiliev argues that Paulauskas' appointment is illegal because the previous Lithuanian State Prosecutor (Barauskas) never resigned (he in fact resigned twice), and that the Soviet Procurator must enforce the decision of the III Congress of People's Deputies that measures must be taken to counter the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet's transgressions of the Soviet Constitution. According to Soviet law, the State Prosecutor of a republic is appointed directly by Moscow. (However, last year the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet altered the article in the Lithuanian Constitution giving the republic the authority to appoint its own State Prosecutor.) Petrauskas is installed in the same building as Paulauskas and for the remainder of the day work in the Procurator continues as usual. During a meeting of all Vilnius prosecutors that afternoon, 107 out of 114 employees say they will remain loyal to Paulauskas, and will be sworn in as Republic of Lithuania prosecutors. Lithuanian Presidium members meet with Vasiliev; during a joint press conference with Vasiliev, President Landsbergis and Presidium member Kazimieras Motieka say that now there is no doubt that by setting up duplicate organs of law and order, Moscow is seeking to undermine the Lithuanian government's control of its own justice system. Motieka adds later that Vasiliev is notorious for his involvement in anti-human rights trials in Leningrad during the seventies.

Sure enough, almost immediately after the press conference, "security is reinforced" at the Lithuanian Procurator by ten Soviet Internal Ministry soldiers, dressed as militia, and sent to the building at Vasiliev's request. Shortly after (at 1:00 AM) approximately ten Soviet Internal Ministry soldiers appear at the main printing plant in Lithuania (owned by the Central Committee of the LCP and located in the outskirts of Vilnius) to guard the facility on behalf of the LCP-CPSU. The Institute of Party History (recently transferred to the Academy of Sciences) is also occupied that night by Soviet troops sent in at the request of the LCP-CPSU.

Estonia declares continuity of independent Republic of Estonia.

31 Soviet President Gorbachev makes statement calling on Lithuanian Parliament and Lithuanian people to repeal declaration of March 11, saying that it will then be possible to deal with a whole array of other questions in Lithuanian-Soviet relations.



Photograph by A. Zdanavičius

New occupant of the Institute for Political Education (which used to house editorial offices of The Lithuanian Review).

door by Soviet soldiers. Lithuanian government urges citizens to remain calm.

24 Elections held to municipal and government bodies. Baltic Council holds its regular monthly meeting and issues communique condemning the Soviet use of military pressure against the new Lithuanian government. Latvian Popular Front leader Dainis Ivars and Estonian Popular Front leader Mart Tarmak affirm that having won majorities in elections to their respective parliaments, their countries are also firmly on the path to independence.

Lithuanian government reports that Soviet KGB and State Procurator officials have arrived in Vilnius. Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis and new Lithuanian Procurator Artūras Paulauskas say that an attempt is clearly being made by Soviet authorities to undermine the system of law and order in Lithuania.

25 Two more buildings belonging to the LCP are occupied by Soviet paratroopers called on by pro-Moscow forces: the Vilnius City Party Headquarters and the Institute for Political Education/Marxism-Leninism University (which housed the Lithuanian Review's editorial offices). A phony issue of the newspaper *Sovetskaya Litva* ("Soviet Lithuania"), until last month one of the republic's official newspapers, which was renamed *Ekho Litvi* after the March 11 declaration of independence, appears in Vilnius. Claiming that the party calling itself the LCP has no right to do so because it is not really communist and will soon change its name to Socialist or Social Democrat, the newspaper describes itself as the "organ of the Lithuanian Communist Party", and derides the present Lithuanian government as bourgeois, fascist, imperialist, and opposed to the rights and interests of Soviet citizens in Lithuania. Probably printed in Moscow, the newspaper did not identify its editor.

Representing Soviet General Varenikov, the commander of the present military operation in Lithuania (commander of all land forces in the Soviet Union, and previously commander of Soviet operations in Afghanistan and Baku), three Soviet military officers from the Vilnius Garrison are invited by Lithuanian leaders to a meeting at the Supreme Council building to explain the purpose of the Soviet army's actions in Lithuania. The Soviet officers insist that the army's activity in Lithuania has increased only in reaction to a perceived threat to Soviet soldiers in the republic, and admit that their occupations of five LCP buildings was solely at the request of LCP-CPSU leaders.

Both sides agree to form a "coordination and communication



## 23 . III . 90 to 11 . IV . 90

Lithuanian State Prosecutor Paulauskas attempts to enter Procuracy at 9:00 AM; is initially turned away but eventually allowed to enter the building and continue his work.

Landsbergis accepts Czechoslovakian President Vaclav Havel's offer to host negotiations between Lithuania and the USSR.

On the weekend of March 31 - April 1, 23 demonstrations are held throughout the Soviet Union in support of Lithuanian independence. Tens of thousands rallied in Moscow, Kiev, and Tbilisi.

## APRIL

1 More Soviet troop movements in Vilnius — in the early morning several dozen armoured personnel carriers are unloaded from train tracks near Vilnius airport and move through the city to the Northern Town military base (close to the centre of Vilnius.) Several helicopter landing pads are reported under construction in the city, again sparking fears of military invasion.

President Landsbergis responds to last Gorbachev demand by saying that Lithuania is willing to discuss every possible question with the Soviet Union, in any level of talks, except that of Lithuania's independence. Presidium member Bronius Kuzmickas says Lithuanian authorities know they are in a serious constitutional conflict with the USSR and they are very eager to begin talks of any sort with Moscow.

Lithuanian government representative Egidijus Bičkauskas returns to Moscow, to be followed the next day by Deputy Prime Minister Romualdas Ozolas, and deputies Mečys Laurinkus and Romas Gudaitis.

Government of the Byelorussian SSR reiterates its pretensions to certain territories given to Lithuania after WW II.

2 LCP-CPSU Central Committee member Juozas Kuolelis calls a meeting at the main printing plant in Lithuania to announce that pro-Moscow forces intend to take full control of the facility, which prints 45 of the country's main newspapers and all of the large dailies. Reading a decision of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers, Kuolelis tells the workers, journalists and editors collected that the plant is the exclusive property of the LCP-CPSU; that "anti-Soviet, anti-socialist" newspapers including the weeklies *Algimimas*, *Sogla-siya*, *Gimtasys Kraštas*, and the independent daily *Respublika* will no longer be printed at the plant; that the LCP daily *Tiesa* ("Truth") and the state Russian daily *Ekho Litvi* will no longer be published there because they are government organs; and that only the newspaper *Soviet Lithuania* in Russian, Lithuanian and Polish will be printed at the plant. Although no force is used to attempt to implement this new policy, the continued presence of Soviet troops heightens fears that the freedom of the press in Lithuania could be in grave danger; plant director Pivoriūnas says the facility will continue printing everything it usually does, and is unanimously supported by the plants 400 workers who say that even machine guns will not force them to cooperate with anti-Lithuanian forces. An agreement is reached with Kuolelis not to interfere with regular publication until the next day, when a meeting of the work collective is held. At the meeting employees' and journalists' position is expressed even more strongly. Kuolelis appears to be discouraged by the inevitability of a strike should any coercion be attempted against workers.

Lithuanian delegation in Moscow is denied a much sought-after meeting with Soviet Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov, but reports to have had a constructive meeting with Aleksander Yakovlev.

3 Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene reports that she has had "[telephone] contact with the highest authorities in Moscow."

The ever-present Soviet helicopter drops more leaflets inviting Vilnius inhabitants to yet another rally by the Soviet Citizens' Rights Committee the next day.

Five foreign citizens issued Lithuanian visas in Warsaw are



Photograph by Z. Nekrošius

The repeated message from Moscow, delivered military style: Soviet helicopters dropped anti-independence leaflets on Vilnius several times after March 11, making a clear point about the threat hovering over Lithuania.

denied entry into the country by Soviet border authorities at the Vilnius Airport.

Polish border crossing at Lazdijai (the only non-Soviet border Lithuania has) is closed by Soviet border authorities. The border, which was an open crossing for Lithuanian, Polish and Soviet citizens, is now closed to all individuals wishing to cross; the border remains open to tourist excursions, professional trips and supply vehicles.

4 6,000 rally in a square next to the Lithuanian Supreme Council in opposition to Lithuanian independence, the "counter-revolution" underway here, and the present government in general. In contrast to the last rally held by the Soviet Citizens' Rights Committee, this meeting is far more heated, arguments more primitive. Speakers include Estonian Interfront leader Kagan and Latvian People's Deputy Viktor Alksnis, who say they came to Lithuania to help clean up the situation and return Soviet citizens full rights, i.e., help local pro-Moscow forces pressure Lithuanian government to follow Gorbachev's order and repeal its declaration of independence.

Earlier that afternoon in the same square, several hundred physically handicapped people rally in support of independence and the present government.

Lithuanian Supreme Council passes resolution in anticipation of an early Spring draft to Soviet Army (scheduled to begin sometime in April) acknowledging that the Lithuanian government cannot ensure the safety of draft resisters but says it assumes moral and legal responsibility; urges all young men of draft age to register with local authorities; and says that a refusal en masse to serve in the Soviet Army would be one more important move toward achieving independence.

5 At 16:00, 50 Soviet soldiers carrying four crates of ammunition stage the final takeover of the Lithuanian Procuracy. Prevented from entering the building that morning, Lithuanian

State Prosecutor Artūras Paulauskas moves his office to the Vilnius City Procuracy.

At 17:00 approximately 200 people picket the Radio and Television Centre in Vilnius protesting the lack of representation given to those groups loyal to the USSR and the CPSU.

A strike called by the LCP-CPSU for 10-11:00 AM in Vilnius factories fails to attract participants; only meetings are held in several factories, but no disruption of work occurs.

Lithuanian Supreme Council issues a reply to Gorbachev's last statement asserting that the constitutional problems Lithuania has with the USSR must be resolved in negotiations. (see document)

7 Travelling to Vilnius from across Lithuania, 300,000 people gather in Vingis Park to express unwavering support for the present government's re-establishment of the country's sovereignty and its efforts to achieve full independence. In the middle of a speech by President Landsbergis a Soviet helicopter attempts to intimidate the crowd by flying low over the demonstrators several times and dropping leaflets urging them to give up their pursuit of freedom from the USSR. In a display of anger as well as determination, the crowd responds with deafening cries of "Shame!" and "Lithuania is free!" In addition to speeches by Sąjūdis and government leaders the crowd is addressed by Russian democrat, historian and prominent member of the Inter-regional group of members of the Congress of Peoples' Deputies, Yuri Afanasiev, who pledges continuing support for the Lithuanian struggle and says that March 11, 1990 will go down in history as the beginning of the end of the Soviet Empire.

Second round of elections to Lithuanian parliament: four new deputies elected — two Sąjūdis candidates, one CPSU, and one independent. Four districts will have to hold run-offs.

8 At 5:00 AM on Palm Sunday, thirteen truckloads of Soviet soldiers arrive at the Publishing Centre. They attempt to dislodge the civilian volunteer security forces delegated by the Lithuanian government to act as a counterweight to Soviet Interior Ministry troops already present. The soldiers unsuccessfully try to enter the building, but are stopped by the civilian volunteer security forces. They return to their trucks and wait. In the meantime, Lithuanian State Radio, in addition to the independent radio station M1 — which has its offices in the Publishing Centre building — urges people throughout the morning to form a picket at the Publishing Centre. Approximately 3,000 people gather. At approximately 11:30 A.M., a number of Lithuanian Supreme Council deputies arrive. They are followed by Deputy Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas and Interior Minister Marijonas Misulionis. After Brazauskas speaks with a Soviet officer, the truckloads of troops leave.

At 5:00 p.m. the same day, the independent music radio station M1 announces an impromptu, all-night music festival at the Publishing Centre. The festival has a dual purpose — rock around the clock and guard the Publishing Centre throughout the night as well. At its height, about 5000 young people gather — no less than 1000 are present all night long.

Smaller crowds gather at Lithuanian TV-Radio headquarters and the Television Tower.

In Leningrad, 10,000 people gather to demonstrate to support Lithuania.

9 Soviet Presidential Council declares that "political, economic and other measures" will be used against Lithuania for its anti-Constitutional behavior.

10 Vytautas Landsbergis sends a telegram to Gorbachev, pleading that he not act on the measures against Lithuania approved by the Soviet Presidential Council. The telegram reads, "We are very concerned that ultra-rightist imperial forces are compelling you to take a wrong step — to continue the wrongs in the 1940s in the Baltics. Do not further this, please; in the name of peace, justice and concord on earth, do not do this."



Photograph by Z. Nekrošius

Dissatisfied with independence: demonstrators at a pro-Soviet rally in Vilnius.



## Lithuanians in the Soviet Army

## Hostages of the Empire

A letter sent to the Commission on Lithuanian Citizens Serving in the Armed Forces of the USSR:

March, 1990

Writing to you is a group of soldiers, serving in the construction battalion of a military division located in a town near Moscow. While we are far from our homeland, we would like to express in correspondence our problems based on the fact that we are Lithuanian.

Serving in the army has become impossible. Phenomena, such as "gangs based on nationality" are commonplace here. Officers and non-coms pay no attention to this. Mostly Lithuanians and soldiers from the other Baltic States suffer at the hands of the soldiers from the eastern republics. Everyday, for no reason, we have to endure insults, humiliation, slander and even beatings. For this reason, there have been many instances where Lithuanians and other Balts, unable to withstand this sort of life, have left their military units and have fled to Lithuania while others have hidden themselves in a factory and have not returned to their companies. After such incidents, searches take place in which the Lithuanian suffers while the culprit continues as usual. Very recently, there was such a case in which a soldier did not return to his company, but instead hid and slept in a factory. He was slandered and punished by the officers. He had already been unable to work with the representatives of the eastern republics and was asking for a transfer to another job. However, the officers paid no attention to this. Finally, he did not return to his division after work.

Another horrible incident was that a young soldier, having served for two months, was raped. After this incident, he was transferred to another unit so that others would not laugh at him. The culprit had been the commander of his section. He was transferred to another job and that is all. Money and other personal belongings are constantly being taken away from the Lithuanians. In other words, one can say that in the army, a "racket" has already appeared. They say that on such and such a day, there must be so many rubles. Clearly, if a certain sum is not brought in, a price will be paid. This is why the soldiers (we also work with civilians) are forced to ask for loans of money.

In other words, life is unbearable. We are asking you if you are able to help in any way. We are still living according to old attitudes. Because we do not see all that is happening in Lithuania, we are afraid to utter even one word. If you are able, please make it possible for us to leave this unit as quickly as possible. As for those of you who are finishing military service, do everything that, after an order, we would be immediately released home. We beg of you. Help us get out from under this oppression. We can no longer listen to people calling us such names as "German!", etc. Soldiers have even slashed their wrists so that they could end up in the hospital and avoid having to serve with these people.

Respectfully, a group of Lithuanians:

(Signed by 19 young Lithuanian soldiers.)

\*Note: In this context, "German" is an euphemism for "Fascist".



Photograph by V. Ščiavickis

One of the rooms in the Naujoji Vilnia Psychiatric Hospital on the morning of March 27, 1990.

disaffected members of other Soviet nationalities.

"It completely breaks the individual. The person loses all desire to live and returns spiritually — and worse, often physically — ruined," says Dr. Petras Navasinskas, a psychiatrist who has treated dozens of soldier-refugees at the Naujoji Vilnia Psychiatric Hospital.

Playing the most obvious (and sinister) card in the ongoing standoff between Moscow and Vilnius, the Soviet Army has made it clear it does not want to let Lithuanian soldiers go, and has repeatedly threatened to return what it considers deserters by force. The most brutal demonstration of that was on March 27, when several dozen Soviet paratroopers broke into the Naujoji Vilnia and violently abducted 21 Lithuanian youth who had sought sanctuary there. Since that night, Lithuanian authorities estimate that up to a hundred more have been abducted from hiding places, friends' homes, and off the street.

According to Soviet military officials, another 5000 Lithuanian boys will be drafted in an early spring draft scheduled to start April 15, despite strong signs that this time, nobody would answer to the call.

The movement to resist Soviet Army service has grown steadily during the past two years. Partly as Lithuanians' consciousness of their right to self-determination grew with the independence movement Sąjūdis; but mainly because psychological and physical abuse against Balts was becoming unbearable.

During the last year, well before

the Lithuanian parliament voted to restore the country's independent status, several hundred Lithuanian soldiers risked severe punishment (and possible courtmartial) and ran away from units often thousands of miles away from home.

Many more have committed suicide while still serving, or returned home in sealed caskets (cause of death: "accident during manoeuvres" or "sudden heart attack") or are still recovering from trauma in the wards of Lithuania's psychiatric hospitals (One young man hung himself two years after returning from the army, having been unable to pull himself out of a deep depression. During the autopsy, it was discovered he had been castrated.)

Unfortunately, the only weapon Lithuanians have against this most concrete aspect of Soviet oppression is passive resistance. Before March 11, Lithuanian youths of draft age started saying that this time, they simply wouldn't go. More than five thousand youth of draft age have handed in their army registration cards in protest. Many of their wives and mothers warned they would sleep on the train tracks and roads leading out of Lithuania, along which their sons and husbands would normally have been taken away.

Now even such actions have been abandoned, and most of the 5000 who were supposed to join the armed forces of the Soviet Union this year are in hiding — in barns, forests, friends' homes — afraid that they could be abducted as more than a hundred "deserters" (in addition to

those taken from the psychiatric hospital) already have been. The Lithuanian government has closed the military commissariats that would normally have registered the youths, and has requested that the Soviet military refrain from using force to enlist them.

Knowing that the resistance to this draft will be spontaneous and unstoppable, the Lithuanian authorities are not urging the young men to comply, and have said they will do everything to "legally and morally" defend those who decide to participate in this demonstration of support for Lithuania's struggle for independence.

According to the Geneva Convention of 1949, it is illegal for the citizens of an occupied country to serve in the armed forces of the occupying force.

Since March 11, the new Lithuanian government has made repeated efforts to discuss these issues with the Soviet military leadership to beg for a postponement of the draft, and to determine the legal status of the escapees that have been abducted. But since March 11, the entire Soviet leadership has shown it is uninterested in legal arguments of any sort, and even less in moral ones.

As we go to press, reports flow to the Lithuanian government of parents of the next set of potential draftees being harassed by Soviet military officials in their homes and workplaces about the whereabouts of their sons. The forced draft is two days away, and it looks frighteningly unlikely that a solution will be found before then.



Photograph by V. Kliukas

Lithuanian soldiers near Baku, February, 1990.

by Carla Gruodis  
The Lithuanian Review

In other countries they're called conscientious objectors and are defended as political prisoners. In Lithuania they're called refugees, and are asking to be treated as such. But in the Soviet Union, the children (for they are 18, 19 years old) who run away from the terror of service in the Soviet Army, are treated worse than criminals and are hunted down like animals.

There are approximately 40,000 young Lithuanian men serving in the Soviet armed forces, and for most the two-year experience is a living hell

they spend the rest of their lives trying to forget.

A decade ago, few men complained of abuse in the Army; most Lithuanian men look back at the obligatory service as an empty experience that wasted the best years of their youth. But as soon as the Baltic republics began to struggle their way out of the USSR two years ago, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian soldiers became victims (often literally) of the resentment and outrage of the rest of the Union. The situation is compounded by the general breakdown of discipline and control in the Soviet Army, and the Balts have become the favorite scapegoats of the

# Gorbachev should pay Lithuania

by Lawrence Summers  
Special to the  
Lithuanian Review

On March 11, the Lithuanian Parliament unanimously adopted a declaration asserting Lithuania's independence from the Soviet Union. Even though Mikhail Gorbachev has termed the action "illegal and invalid", his overall response to Lithuania's struggle for autonomy has been reasonable. The one startling exception is Mr. Gorbachev's demand that Lithuanians buy their freedom from the Soviet Union for \$33 billion — a demand that is, morally and practically, extortion.

Mr. Gorbachev and the Politburo have explicitly and repeatedly, if reluctantly, acquiesced in the principle that the Baltic republics have the right to secede. They recognize that whereas the American colonies voluntarily entered a union and ratified the Constitution, Soviet Republics never took any such step. In many cases, as in Lithuania, they were annexed with the use of force over the bitter protests of their citizens.

In setting the price at which Lithuania could buy its independence, Moscow has gone further and explicitly acknowledged that independence would come and that it was only the details that remained to be negotiated.

Unfortunately, the \$33 billion

ransom asked by Mr. Gorbachev is financially and morally absurd. Today, at free market exchange rates, which are one-20th of the ludicrous official Soviet rates used in Mr. Gorbachev's calculations, \$33 billion translates into about 500 billion rubles.

**Gorbachev's demand that Lithuanians buy their freedom for \$33 billion is, morally and financially, extortion.**

This compares with total savings of all Lithuanians and all Lithuanian enterprises of less than 15 billion rubles and a total annual income of Lithuanian workers of at most 10 billion rubles. There were no reliable appraisals of Lithuania's capital stock, but the level of its income makes it very unlikely that it is worth as much as 50 million rubles — one tenth of what Mr. Gorbachev is asking.

Mr. Gorbachev's moral calculus is no better than his arithmetic. He seems to believe that Lithuania should buy all of the Soviet-owned capital in Lithuania as compensation

for leaving the Soviet Union. The logic fails on at least two counts.

First, official Soviet statistics reveal that only about half the deposits that Lithuania's citizens have made in Soviet banks over the last two decades have been reinvested in Lithuania. The rest have been invested in other republics. It stands to reason that Lithuania's claim on Soviet assets outside Lithuania exceed the Soviet claim on Lithuanian assets. Actually, the Soviets should compensate the Lithuanians for renouncing their ownership share in all the non-Lithuanian assets of the Soviet state!

Second, there is a long moral and legal tradition that oppressors pay reparations to the repressed, not the other way around. Stalin killed or deported one-third of Lithuania's population and seized the farmland of hundreds of thousands of families. The KGB has maintained an active presence in Lithuania ever since. And Soviet economic management has impoverished Lithuania. In 1940, an independent Lithuania enjoyed a standard of living that was about equal to Finland's. Today, Lithuania lags by 50 per cent or more.

There is ample economic opportunity for the new Lithuanian republic. Situated less than 1,000 miles from Western Europe, and highly skilled and educated, its workers now earn less than 15 cents an hour

— one-tenth the wage rate of South Korea. Its new leaders have made clear their determination to replace the Soviet ruble with a real currency and to move toward a real market economy. Over time, there is no reason why Lithuania and the other Baltic states cannot enjoy standards of living approaching those of Finland, which also lies on Russia's border and trades heavily with it.

Leaving aside Mr. Gorbachev's absurd ransom demand, arranging Lithuania's withdrawal from the

**How the West responds could determine the world's geopolitical configuration as a new millennium begins.**

Soviet Union will not be easy. Imagine what would have to be negotiated for New York to secede — only assume that all of New York's companies were owned and operated out of Washington. The Lithuanian economy will lose its shackles, but also the heavy subsidies for raw material inputs that it received as a Soviet state. As always when radical surgery is required, things get worse before they get better.

Here's where the West can step in. It is ironic that the United States, which has never recognized the Soviet conquest of the Baltics and annually proclaimed its fealty to Lithuanian independence, has now backed off and simply urged orderly negotiations. US recognition of Lithuania would make it much easier for Lithuania to get the aid for economic transition it requires from the world's financial institutions.

Lithuania's bold step begins what may well be the dismantling of the Soviet Empire. Many other Soviet republics will soon follow. How the West responds to these demands could determine the future of what is now the Soviet Union and, with it, the world's geopolitical configuration as a new millennium begins.

If the Soviets had permitted it, the US would surely have given the Baltic republics Marshall Plan assistance 40 years ago after World War II. Why have 40 more years of oppression and impoverishment made the Lithuanians any less deserving of urgent US assistance?

*Lawrence Summers is a professor of economics at Harvard University. He is an economic advisor to the government of Lithuania, where he has visited several times during the last three months. This article is reprinted from the March 19, 1990 issue of the New York Times by permission of the author.*

## Delegation of Polish senators visits Vilnius

# Polish solidarity with Lithuania

Bronislaw Geremek, a leader of "Solidarity" and Chairman of the Citizens' Parliamentary Caucus in the Polish Seim, led a delegation of Polish senators and parliamentarians on a visit to Lithuania two weeks after its declaration of independence. Liubov Chornaya and Birutė Vyšniauskaitė talked to him about the visit on March 27.

**Lithuanian Review: What was the purpose of your visit to Vilnius?**  
Bronislaw Geremek: "Solidarity" has had close ties with Sąjūdis for a long time, and the purpose of this meeting was to discuss how to broaden and strengthen our relations. And we think it is appropriate that we express our attitude to Lithuania's quest for freedom and independence directly to the new Lithuanian parliament.

**LR: How do you think the present tense situation will be resolved?**

**BG:** Our visit occurred during a time when a black cloud is gathering over Lithuania. For this reason, our attitude is clear and our support is based on Solidarity's own experience — the political lessons we learned could be quite useful to Lithuania. I am convinced that the use of pressure and military force is not the way to solve political problems, and our experience tells us that only through dialogue and broad contacts can solutions to such problems be found.

It is obvious that the empire is crumbling, falling apart, as every other empire in the world has done. This will happen whether the Soviet leadership likes it or not. Gorbachev's reforms have changed economic and political life, but have left the structures of the Union unal-

tered. The empire is collapsing, but a new set of relationships among the republics has not yet been created.

Before his death, Academician Sakharov said that the Soviet Union must inevitably become a confederation. If this does not happen, the country will face great trouble. Every people has a right to independent statehood, and only a free and independent people can become unified in a federation or confederation.

But the bleakest political scenario is still possible in Lithuania. The results of such a scenario would be disastrous not only for Lithuania, but for Europe, for the whole world. The use of military force in Lithuania would erase all the positive results of recent Soviet policy. The actions of the Soviet army in Lithuania are the work of opponents of perestroika who want to hinder this progressive process. If they are not halted soon, it will be too late — a satanic machine will be let loose. And I think there are people who want that.

**LR: What is your opinion on the problem of Poles in Lithuania?**

**BG:** This is a very complicated question. All of Central Europe, while fighting for freedom, has been plunged into ethnic conflict. The fact that at present there is little concord between Poles and Lithuanians in Lithuania can be explained by the fact that Poles here don't have the guarantees necessary to develop their culture. There are very few who belong to the intelligentsia. That is why they feel weak; and it is because of this feeling of weakness that they are not very supportive of Lithuanians' goals.

We in Poland felt it to be our duty to support the movement of

Lithuanians towards freedom, their struggle for independence. And we are obliged to help the Polish minority understand events here. We had a long talk today with the Polish parliamentary deputies today, and consider their demands — for expanded Polish education and access to churches — to be justified.

Poles and Lithuanians need to form completely new social structures leading away from totalitarianism. This is a task for all post-totalitarian countries. Our societies tried to defend themselves from the totalitarianism which ate away at them like a cancer growth. We must create a new life for national minorities. That is why we sustain the hope that Lithuanians and Poles will work out some sort of model. Our talks with the representatives of the Polish community were very honest. And inspired hope.

**LR: Are you hopeful about the future of Eastern Europe as a whole?**

**BG:** The essence of the question is how our new societies are to be organized. It would be best to organize them on the principle of nationality, because nations are existing entities in which people are united by a common ethnicity and origin. But the state must be able to harmonize the interests of different social and ethnic groups. A national identity helps people to resist totalitarianism, but along with this democratic institutions must be developed. If this second condition is not taken into consideration, then national consciousness can acquire dangerous tendencies. The most important thing now is to manage the economic crisis because it can lead to dangerous destabilization. If we can regulate the economy, then we can look at the future with optimism.

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Valery Ivanov: All power to the Soviets?

# Soviet Lithuania Forever

Valery Ivanov is a leader of the pro-Soviet organization "Yedinstvo" and an outspoken critic of the Lithuanian declaration of independence. The following interview was conducted two weeks ago by Claudia Sinnig, a journalist from East Germany.

Claudia Sinnig: Could you please tell me about your work?

Valery Ivanov: I have been out of work for political reasons since May 1989. I used to work at the "Znanye" association, but because of my political work in "Yedinstvo" I've been expelled from "Znanye". I was fired because they said I was missing from work for three hours. Now I'm living on money I get from "Yedinstvo", but I don't have a bank-account or a contract and generally I do not have any social guarantees. It's just enough to live.

CS: When and how was your organization founded?

VI: The organization was founded in November 1988 after the Founding Congress of Sąjūdis, where it was said that Lithuania is for Lithuanians. It was declared there that whoever is not Lithuanian should leave Lithuania, and higher education in Russian and Polish was abolished. So in general, discriminating steps were made concerning the non-Lithuanian population and our people came together and founded an organization to defend their interests. Now, we also have Lithuanians who are of socialist internationalist opinions. Well, they are older, but they are existing, in Kaunas, for instance, and in other towns. They are against separatism, against the secession of the republic from the Soviet Union. They want socialist development and they want to strive for Communist ideals, and with new methods and new means to reach these ideals under contemporary circumstances.

CS: You consider yourself a Marxist-Leninist. Have there been changes in your ideals in the recent years?

VI: Understood your question. Good question, I like your question. I think it's good you asked it. You see, a very unpleasant thing is happening all over Europe. People for some reason forgot that those Communist ideals which were proclaimed by the founders of Marxism-Leninism, such as Marx, Engels, Lenin and other famous people, did not appear artificially. They are filled with all human ideals of the development of mankind. For some reason people are saying now that collectivism, respect for labour, respect for the human, no exploitation of man by man, the development of the human individual - they are saying that this is bad. But no one can say that these ideals are bad. There were distortions, yes, distortions. Who should be blamed? Stalin and his epoch, and there were people who built Communism for themselves on these ideals (laughs), and used to live very well, our Brezhnev for example. You know what I'm talking about. I'd like to say that it's not right to deny ideals, it's only possible to deny methods to reach them. Today we can solve these methods on the basis of those realities we have. What do we have? A relatively stable economic basis, a developed infrastructure. Furthermore, we have highly qualified people who are reading, thinking, counting, not illiterate like a hundred years ago, who are able to analyze the situation.

CS: How do you envision the future of Lithuania?

VI: My wish for the future of the republic is that the processes of democratization should begin. They did not yet begin, because all the mass media are usurped by Sąjūdis. The administration is purely Lithuanian, apart from the factories under All-Union jurisdiction. Any protest, any expression against, carries the possibility of being at the expense of the one who is saying it. He can be fired, he can lose a bonus. Generally speaking, they find methods to do that covering it with other reasons. In principle these are the same Stalinist methods, fascist methods - I don't know what to call them.

CS: I've heard about the minority commission in Lithuania. The woman who is in charge of that... [the reference is to Halina Kobačkaite - ed.]

VI: Yes, we did not appoint her. She does not represent our interests. I do not understand how she can think that she represents the interests of Russians, Poles, Jews and so on. She has been simply appointed by someone, I don't know by whom. We consider this illegal.

CS: I'd like to know something about your view on the national question here. Where does the conflict come from which is obvious now?

VI: The conflict started due to the fact that a certain part of the political groups of the republic have, I'd say, a certain class character. Who? The children of those who owned land in the past, when land was the main means of production, when there were no factories or industry, of political leaders who had good positions under Smetona, owners of smaller things like houses and so on... These are the people who want a re-establishment of the bourgeois society, the re-establishment of their property here. They were interested in leaving the Soviet Union. This is one side. On the other, there was the Communist Party of Lithuania led by Brazauskas. At that time the leadership was corrupt, obviously involved in certain illegal doings, financial, and so on. They have not been controlled. And when perestroika came they understood that there could be a Uzbekian case, that Gdlyan and Ivanov [Moscow prosecutors who dealt with major crime and were removed from their work when they began to investigate members of the CPSU Politburo in Moscow - ed.] could come here and have a look at what they have done, that they could end up in prison. And these leaders of the Party and of the republic realized that they had to defend themselves somehow. They got the idea to make the republic sovereign, to cut off the jurisdiction from the centre, so that Gdlyan and Ivanov would not come and interfere in their matters. And on the basis of these aims they agreed to lead the republic out of the Union.

CS: How will the situation develop further?

VI: Our movement is of the opinion that the President of the USSR should immediately announce the imposition of presidential power in the republic, that means he should dissolve the Supreme Council of the republic and annul all its decisions. Why? Because there is no perestroika going on here, but a coup d'état on the parliamentary level with a change of the socio-political order. The Constitution of 1938, that means of the bourgeois republic, has been approved. This is in direct violation of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which guarantees the socialist order in the entire land.

CS: Do you coordinate your activities with the Interfront organizations in Latvia and Estonia?

VI: Yes, completely. We are in contact with them.

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# Russians of the Baltic

by Anatol Lieven  
Special to the Lithuanian Review

The future of relations between Russians living outside the Russian Federation and the local majorities is perhaps the single greatest question mark hanging over the future of the republics now making up the Soviet Union.

The small Russian minority has already shown itself capable of making a great deal of trouble for the Lithuanian government; but its numbers pale into insignificance compared to those of the Russian populations in Latvia, Estonia, the Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

Estonia has a 39 per cent non-Estonian population. Almost all are Russians or Russian-speakers. Almost 50 per cent of the population of Tallinn are Russian-speakers, and they make up the majority in the north-eastern district of Virumaa and its capital, Narva, which lies on the border with the Russian Federation. The area had a Russian population of some thirty per cent in independent Estonia. Massive immigration since the war has brought the Russian population in Narva today to around 96 per cent.

The Russians came to work in the oil-shale quarries which have ravaged the landscape of Virumaa, and in the two great power stations and the factories which feed off this oil. The energy produced in Narva provides heat and light for Leningrad, and what is left over is exported by the Soviet Union to Finland in return for hard currency. These Soviet profits - gained at the cost of great environmental damage - have caused much anger in Estonia - and they give Moscow a solid reason for wanting to hang onto Narva if Estonia becomes independent.

The municipal councils of the three main towns in Virumaa have now voted not to accept the decision of the Estonian Supreme Soviet on a period of transition to independence. They have announced that they will continue to obey Soviet law. It is not yet clear what this will mean, or has meant for the position of the Chairman of the Narva Executive Council, Mr. Vladimir Mizhul. In appearance an apparition of the old school, in his views Mr. Mizhul is anything but; when I met him in February he expressed strong support for Estonian independence.

The existence of such figures means that the game for Narva is not yet up. The great majority of ordinary people with whom I talked on the streets there also said that they were against Estonia leaving the Soviet Union. Most however also said that if it did, they would not wish that Narva should be separated and joined to Russia. "After all, this is Estonian

land", was the generous response of two people I met.

The mood of ordinary Russians in Tallinn towards Estonian independence is much more aggressive. The reasons for the difference seem to be threefold. The first is that people in Narva are in a position every day to compare the economic situation in Estonia with that in the Russian Federation just across the river; and the contrast is not encouraging to Soviet loyalists. The meat section of the supermarket in Narva that I visited contained one fish sausage and four tortured chickens, which is little enough, God knows; but it is better than that in the Russian town of Ivangoroo which contained precisely nothing. "Tomorrow, five o'clock, maybe", was the answer I got when I asked. Patriotism goes down much better with a bit of chicken - even Russian patriotism, and emaciated Estonian chicken.

The second reason is probably that Narva is a real society, with its own intelligentsia and structures; and this makes it rather less susceptible to being manipulated by demagogues than the immigrant workers of Tallinn, who have never really settled down into a proper society. The small Russian intelligentsia there is agonizing over questions of self-definition, and the restoration of Russian culture after the years of Soviet destruction. It has few contacts with the workers.

As Dmitri Mikhailov, leader of the Russian cultural society which supports independence, told me, "What would be the point of immersing ourselves in the working class sea? We would lose our identity as intellectuals, and their cultural level would scarcely be raised".

Connected with this is the feeling of rootedness and security. As a trading post on the Slavic frontier, Russians have been living in Narva since its foundation in the thirteenth century. Given their situation on the Russian frontier, they can be confident that unless Russia collapses into an almost unimaginable degree of chaos, no one in Estonia will ever be in a position to be seriously unkind to them.

A similar feeling of security exists among many of the Russians in Riga - likewise, a city with an older and more structured Russian society than most others in the Baltic - and which today has a Russian majority. The very fact of having so many Russians has forced the Latvian Popular Front, to a much greater extent than Sąjūdis or the various independence groups in Estonia, to woo the Russian population. With the help of educated Russians, often from mixed families, they have had some success, as the

election results showed. After all, there is a deep hostility among both Westernizing liberals and religious conservatives in the Russian community towards the Soviet legacy.

These feelings however need very careful fostering. The fears of many of the ordinary Russian workers in the Baltic may be largely groundless or irrational, but they are very real; and if allowed to grow unimpeded, they have the potential to cause very serious problems for Lithuania, and to bring utter ruin to Latvia and Estonia.

This is not a question of historical justice - for clearly, on that basis, few of the Russians have any right to be here at all. But on the grounds of sheer political pragmatism, and for the sake of their countries, winning over the Russians - and in Lithuania, the Poles - should be at the top of the agenda in all three Baltic republics - whereas in fact this question is tacked onto the end as an afterthought.

I had two depressing examples of this on Sunday night. Telephoning Estonia, nobody could tell me the exact details of the decisions made in Virumaa, or what had happened to Mr. Mizhul. In Vilnius, no one could say what the election results had been in New Vilnius and Snieckus. Nor did anyone in either capital appear to find this at all important.

If the populations of Snieckus and Narva vote to secede to join the Russian Federation, a protest will go up from Lithuania and Estonia which will ring around the world. No-one in Vilnius appears to have been listening seriously to the (Lithuanian) Mayor of Snieckus when he says that while the local population does not want Snieckus to go to Russia, it does want very much that Ignalina should remain in Soviet hands - a view which I was able to confirm myself on a visit to Snieckus.

Nor does anyone seem to have considered the effects on the feelings of the Russian population of Vilnius of cutting off Leningrad TV. Nor indeed, has thought been given to the possibility of making a gesture towards the Poles, giving some of the extra Lithuanian TV time now available to Polish programs, rather than replacing Leningrad with Warsaw.

Precisely because the bulk of Russians here are poor, inarticulate and socially resentful, they should be taken very seriously. A similar mixture of powerlessness and tremendous potential power led to Fascism. My visits to both Narva and Snieckus showed that there is nothing inevitable about such a development - but also that it can only be avoided if the leaders of the Baltic nations make tremendous efforts to avoid it. Once again, it is not justice or idealism which demands this - it is cold reason of state.

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